

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BERN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 00134

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR MRN 00134 VICE 00L34

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, PFOR, MASS, FI

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENTAL STUDY OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS SUPPLY RESTRAINTS

REF: STATE 004313

1. FINLAND IS MORE A RECIPIENT THAN SUPPLIER NATION IN
THE INTERNATIONAL ARMS TRADE FIELD. ALTHOUGH FINNS SELL A
WIDE RANGE OF MILITARY ITEMS RANGING FROM SMALL ARMS PRIMERS
TO ARTILLERY PIECES, THE QUANTITY IS COMPARATIVELY SMALL
BOTH IN TERMS OF ABSOLUTE QUANTITY AND IMPORTANCE TO THEIR
ECONOMY. QUANTITIES AND TYPES OF FDF ARMAMENTS IS LIMITED BY
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THE 1947 PEACE TREATY AND MEAGER DEFENSE BUDGETS. PURCHASES

OF AIRCRAFT, NAVAL CRAFT AND MAJOR GROUND FORCE END ITEMS ARE MAINLY FROM THE USSR AND SWEDEN WITH SMALLER PURCHASES FROM FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

2. FINLAND HAS LONG HISTORY OF PARTICIPATION IN UN PEACEKEEPING ACTIVITIES AND GOF HAS BECOME MORE AND MORE ACTIVE IN ARMS CONTROL/DISARMAMENT MATTERS. ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN CONCENTRATING ON AREAS WHERE THEY FEEL THEY, AS A NEUTRAL, CAN PLAY USEFUL ROLE, SUCH AS NPT SAFEGUARDS, CCD NUCLEAR-FREE ZONES STUDY, AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONTROL, THEY ARE IN FAVOR OF SALT, MBFR, COMPLETE NUCLEAR TEST BAN, AND WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE.

3. WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED CONVENTIONAL ARMS QUESTION WITH FINNS, BUT EXPECT THEM TO FAVOR TIGHT CONTROLS ON SALES OR SUPPLIES OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS, ESPECIALLY TO AREAS OF TRADITIONAL OR POTENTIAL CONFLICT. WE WOULD THEREFORE EXPECT FINNS TO REACT FAVORABLY TO ANY INITIATIVE AIMED AT RESTRAINING CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS -- PROVIDED FINNS CERTAIN THAT SUCH INITIATIVE WOULD NOT BE LOOKED UPON BY MOSCOW AS AN OUTRIGHT ANTI-SOVIET MOVE.

4. AS TO APPROACH OR FORM OF TRANSFER RESTRAINTS, FINNS IN OUR ESTIMATE WOULD MUCH PREFER AN APPROACH ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH EAST AND WEST. THEY WOULD ALSO SUPPORT A VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT APPROACH ENDORSED BY AT LEAST SEVERAL OF THE MAJOR SUPPLIER NATIONS. FINNS CAN BE EXPECTED TO FAVOR AN APPROACH GIVING THE UN OR SOME SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION A REGULAR-TORY OR SUPERVISORY ROLE.

5. WE BELIEVE FINNS WOULD BE IN FAVOR OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS, AGAIN PROVIDED THAT FINNS SURE SOVIETS WOULD NOT CONSTRUE LATTER AN ANTI-SOVIET MOVE. GIVEN THE ABOVE MENTIONED PROVISIO, FINNS WOULD PROBABLY PREFER A GREAT DEAL OF PREPARATION AND INFORMAL NEGOTIATING BEFORE AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE WAS CALLED. IT
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WOULD NOT SURPRISE US IF THE FINNS WERE TO OFFER TO HOST A WELL-PREPARED CONFERENCE, WELL-PREPARED IN THE SENSE THAT CONFERENCE HAD REASONABLE EXPECTATION OF SUCCESS AND OF AVOIDING ACRIMONIOUS CONTROVERSY.
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